



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GREASEWOOD MAN SENTENCED FOR FIRST DEGREE MURDER FOR 2002 DOUBLE HOMICIDE ON NAVAJO RESERVATION

PHOENIX – Kenderick Begay, 29, of Greasewood, Ariz. was sentenced by U.S. District Judge David G. Campbell to two concurrent life sentences and 35 consecutive years after being found guilty by a federal jury in June 2007 of two counts of first degree murder and two counts of discharging a firearm during a crime of violence.

Begay shot Ortisha Chee and Jerel Taliman, both 17 years old and Ganado High School Seniors, in the early morning hours of March 28, 2002. Witnesses testified during the trial that they were with Begay when he stopped the victims' car on a remote road in the Greasewood area, retrieved a .30 semi-automatic rifle from his truck, walked up to the passenger side of the victims' car and shot 8-9 times into the vehicle at close range. Jerel Taliman died at the scene but Ortisha Chee managed to drive her car into a nearby housing area and seek help. Ortisha died three days later from her wounds.

The defendant's sister, Mecheryl Begay, was convicted by a federal jury on May 23, 2007, for lying to FBI agents and committing perjury before the grand jury during the investigation of these murders. Her sentencing is set for November 2007 before U.S. District Judge Frederick Martone.

The investigation leading to the guilty verdict lasted for five years and was conducted by the FBI with assistance from Navajo Department of Public Safety, Criminal Investigations. Sentencing occurred on Monday, October 1, 2007. The prosecution was handled by Ann Birmingham Scheel and Kimberly Hare, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-06-626-PCT-DGC
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